



Dave Blackwell, Pastor

P. O. Box 378, Estancia, NM 87016
Church Office 384-5215
Parsonage 384-2710



*Sunday Worship 9:00 AM
Nursery Provided
Church School 10:30 AM*

Newsletter - January, 1998

JANUARY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS:

Lay Assistant: Cheryl Darnell.
Ushers: Jeff & Kathy Gorum
Greeters: Susan & Sam Wilson
Acolytes: Erinmarie Blackwell & Sydney Alfonso

YOUTH SCRIPTURE READERS:

January 4: Brian Wilson
January 11: Dominic Griffo
January 18: Laura Sanchez
January 25: Jennifer Gorum

Pastor Dave's NEW OFFICE HOURS:

Mon. - 8 a.m. - 6 p.m., Estancia (Business & Visitation)
Tues. - 8 a.m. - 1 p.m., Estancia (Business & Visitation)
2 p.m. - 6 p.m., Mtair (Business & Visitation)
Wed. - 8 a.m. - 6 p.m., STUDY DAY - emergency calls only please.
Thurs. - 8 a.m. - 3 p.m., Travel Day, Albuq. and/or Mtair 3 p.m.
- 6 p.m., Estancia, (Business & Visitation)
Fri. - OFF DUTY
Sat. - 8 a.m. - Noon, Estancia, (Business & Visitation)
Noon - 6 p.m., PREPARATION TIME
Sunday - If no church meetings in p.m. - OFF DUTY

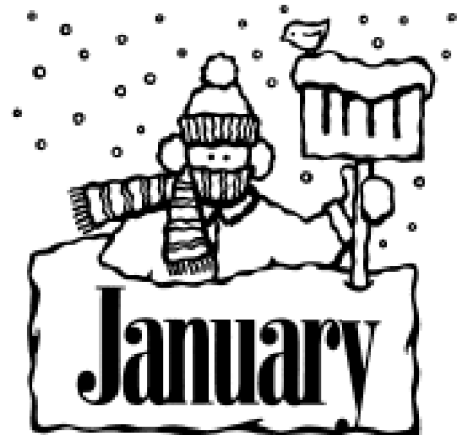
THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO PROVIDED MANY CHRISTMAS GIFTS TO C.Y.& F. KIDS.

And special thanks to Audrey Rodriguez for her care and work on that project

The Blackwells thank all of you for the kindness you have expressed in your cards and contributions.

The Children's Christmas pageant on December 17 was terrific! Thank you to the 2 Co-Directors, Julie Newsom and Julieanne Welch who had no previous experience directing church pageants. Thank you to all the parents who helped with costumes and carpentry. And, THANKS KIDS!! You were a blessing to all of us.

FOOD BANK: Charles Hughes reports that our church food bank is the recipient of \$1,000 from the F.E.M.A. program. This money is necessary to help keep the pantry stocked with food, soap, etc. It can also be used to help some with utility payments and overnight motel bills which a few in the church have paid for without want of recognition. Did you know that besides your gracious contributions, the food bank has been helped by our public school children, The Mavericks, the C.C.A. (prison) staff, Diamond Shamrock, and the Baptist and Assembly of God churches?



Did you know that approximately 125 food baskets were given during 1997? The food baskets average about \$30.00 per basket. You do the math.

This is one of the most successful assistance programs in Estancia.

But, we need help. We need folks to help prepare baskets, deliver, and pick up supplies. Sue Hughes is the chairperson. Others on the committee help with storage and preparation. But there is a need for at least two other people to give assistance to this very worthwhile outreach program.

Pray about it. If you feel led, call Pastor Dave (384-5215) or Sue Hughes (384-2978).

Matthew 25:37-40 tells us that when we feed the hungry, we also feed Christ.

Membership & Attendance

Since last year at this time there have been 17 new members and 6 children who are classified as baptized members. This brings our membership up from 100 to 117. But the average Sunday morning attendance has gone from 67 in 1996 to 58 in 1997.

Does this concern you? Let's look at the numbers: End of
1994: 86 members, avg. atten. = 30.
1995: 95 members, avg. atten. = 44.
from '94: +10% members; +46% atten.
1996: 100 members, avg. atten. = 67.

from '95: +5% members; +47% atten.
1997: 117 members, avg. atten. = 58.
from '96: +17% members; -13% atten.

The good news: there are 31 more members (36% increase) than in 1994 and the gain in Sunday attendance has nearly doubled (93%) from then. The bad news: in 1996 there was good growth in the books, but not in the pews. Why? A growth in membership should mean more in worship.

Are we complacent about Sunday worship time? Do we take it for granted? What can we do ensure that this Body of Christ thrives in Christ?

THE NEW YEAR

The man who goes into the new year without some priorities governing his life and without some principles guiding his behavior, is prey to the tempting, unimportant and destructive things in life.

The new year is an opportunity to sort out the useless tasks and plan for the important; to review the failures and resolve to be successful; to take an inventory of causes and pledge life to purpose and service. These being done, the new will truly be new, different and better.

—C. Neil Strait



This time of year we seem compelled to make New Year's resolutions. You know what they are: lose weight, read every day, spend more time with the family, etc. Somewhere in your list may be the resolution to give more attention to God in prayer, Scripture study, worship time, and Christian service. If you did not have that last resolution on your list of things to do, or do better, for next year, maybe you should ask, "Why?"



1. Is it because you are already doing so much for God that you cannot see any possibility of doing more? Really?

2. Or, is it because you don't feel you can spare the time to give Him what you think He wants? So is it better to not promise Him anything at all?

3. Or, is it because you just never thought of a resolution for Him? Hmmm.

Where does God fit into your priorities of life and time?

There are some people who tell me that they need to get back into prayer, get back to church, get back into serving Him by helping those who are disabled and/or lonely. But they seldom get back to anything that they said they would do for God and themselves. But, when they are in sudden financial, emotional, and/or spiritual need (notice the priority of that list), they call me to talk or pray (notice the priority again) with them. Afterward, they say, "We are coming back to church. We NEED to get back." But, when Sunday comes, they are seldom back in church, and then only for a week or two. Instead, they get back to doing what they want to do again, and it doesn't include worshipping God in church. When I see them later, they get back to their old excuses:

- "Couldn't get up in time."
- "We had company late last night."
- "It was little cold this morning."
- "It was a nice day. Went for a ride."
- "I felt funny about coming."

My personal "favorite" excuse is, "We wanted to spend family time together." (Oh, but not at church??)

But, when trouble strikes....

Two lessons for all of us, committed worshippers of God or not:

1. When Peter tried to talk to Jesus after Jesus said He was going to suffer and die, Jesus said to him, "Get behind me Satan. You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men." (Mark 8:33)

2. Anything that puts a distance between you and Jesus and lures you away from His call for you to obedient unto Him, is sponsored by the devil himself. From where I stand, it is amazing to see so many people crow about their hard work and self-reliance get brought to their knees in anguish when trials occur and the guilt of being away from God rears its ugly head.

So what will your resolutions be?

Who or what will take the highest priority?

Who or what will be given most your time, energy and money?

Who or what will give care and hope to your soul and your future?

Galatians 6:7 says, "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. We reap what we sow. The one who sows to please one's sinful nature reaps destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

The Right Thing

Paul Meier said, "Attitudes are nothing more than habits of thought, and habits can be acquired. An action repeated becomes an attitude realized." Once, while leading a conference, I was asked for a simple plan to help a person change some wrong attitudes. I recommended two things to help her change her attitude. First:

- Say the right words,*
- Read the right books,*
- Listen to the right tapes,*
- Be with the right people,*
- Do the right things,*
- Pray the right prayer*



The second was to do number one every day, not just once or only when you feel like it, and watch your life change for the better.

—John C. Maxwell
in *Developing the Leader Within You*

Pastor Dave

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Resolutions on the Mirror

Write your spiritual resolutions below, clip out, and tape them to your mirror. Each morning as you see yourself in the mirror, look at your resolutions and imagine how God sees your commitment.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____